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UNION UPDATE



Big arbitration victory for special schools workers

10-month workers enforce their right to use vacation to ensure summer pay & benefits

Local 1000 members who work 10 months a year at the Department of Education's school for deaf students in Fremont won a big arbitration victory, thwarting the state's effort to prevent employees from using their vacation and leave time to receive paychecks in the summer when school is not in session.

The ruling directly applies to about 100 members of Bargaining Unit 20 at the California School for the Deaf, Fremont. However, Local 1000 attorneys are pressing the state to apply the terms of the arbitration decision to all affected Local 1000 members—about 350—at the state's three special schools, which function as boarding schools for deaf and blind K-12 students.

"This victory means a lot to those of us who are on the frontlines of caring for and educating these wonderful young people," said Zena Anderson, a night attendant and Local 1000 steward who organized her coworkers around the grievance. "Our legal victory follows an organizing victory here because for the first time this group of mostly deaf employees is mobilized, and we fought back. Deaf employees here used to feel marginalized but now we know the strength of working with our union."

Management reversed 25 year practice

The case stems from a Feb. 1, 2013 memo from the Fremont school's superintendent that prohibited all 10-month employees from using their vacation and other leave time during the summer to continue receiving paychecks.

Local 1000 immediately challenged the new policy, which reversed a practice that had been in place for more than 25 years, as a violation of our contract.

Arbitrator Norman Brand agreed. His 14-page opinion unambiguously rules that school officials violated terms of Local 1000's memorandum of

understanding (MOU) with the state by implementing the scheduled change.

"The department violated the MOU by forbidding their employees from using their earned leave credits to get paid during summer recess," wrote Brand, who added that the state's interpretation of Local 1000's contract was "fatally flawed."

Although Brand's ruling does not refer to employees outside Unit 20 at the Fremont school, the contract language is virtually the same. The ruling is retroactive and specifically allows employees to amend their previous time sheets for the summers of 2013 and 2014.



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Local 1000 steward,
California School for the Deaf, Fremont

Helping Young People Get Their Foot in the Door

Member activist Robert Bayze working to build a stronger union

When Robert Bayze started his career as a state worker a year ago, it never occurred to him not to sign up with his union and get involved. Throughout college, he studied how the shrinking of the middle class, stagnant wages and reductions in employer benefits, were connected to the decline in labor union membership. For Robert, having an opportunity to join with other workers to reverse this trend was something he relished.

Bayze's own experience trying to get a job with the state helped him see a need that was going unmet and also played a big part in his desire to become a member activist in Local 1000. He knew the union could help younger job seekers, unfamiliar with the often times complicated process of applying for a state job, get their foot in the door.

"I became a member activist as soon as I started working because I wanted to help others in the community access state jobs," said Bayze. "I had friends, like me, who were looking for a state job but needed help navigating the application and examination process. I knew Local 1000 could help."

Bayze, a Staff Services Analyst at the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), went to work in Local 1000's Young DLC, a statewide committee of under-35 Local 1000 member activists, to develop career workshops for young job seekers interested in working for the state. The young DLC put on their first workshop in June of this year and have another one planned for Saturday, December 6 in Sacramento. "I saw it as a win/

win. Local 1000 helps young workers access state jobs, and once those workers get hired they remember how they got there and become solid Local 1000 members. That's a good thing."

Mixers help young state workers network

Bayze has also been helping Local 1000 reach out to younger state workers by partnering with Antonio Baxter, a coworker at DHCS and head of public relations for Young DLC, to organize social mixers around the Sacramento area. Bayze says the events have given the group the opportunity to introduce young state workers to Local 1000 in an environment that is more social and relaxed than the workplace. "The mixers have been a great place for us to network and get to know one another. The conversations haven't been about how horrible the boss is. They've been about sharing information about how to take our careers to the next level and help the community in the process."

For more information about the upcoming Young DLCs mixer and workshops please contact

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